



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 19, 2010

I send greetings to all those observing National Tsunami Awareness Week.

Every coastline in the world—including our own—is vulnerable to a tsunami. The September 2009 tsunami that struck American Samoa was a tragic display of this natural phenomenon's destructive power. During this week, we pay tribute to those lost and recommit ourselves to preparing our shores and protecting our citizens.

While the danger of tsunamis cannot be eliminated, knowledge is pivotal to ensure readiness and emergency responsiveness. For those living in tsunami-threatened areas, awareness of warning signs, evacuation routes, and shelter locations can save lives and mitigate the impact of this hazard.

Efficient warning systems also play a key role in preparing our Nation's coastal communities. The United States Tsunami Warning System, operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), has aided research and forecasting to improve coordination and public safety efforts. Through further collaboration with Federal agencies, and state and local government, we can provide all Americans the tools they need to effectively respond to tsunamis.

I congratulate the employees of NOAA for their passion and dedication to our Nation's coastal communities. I wish you all the best.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Barack Obama", is centered below the text. The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large initial "B" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.